

WHEN Mrs. Winthrop Aldrich leaves London, home-bound for America, she will take with her the affectionate good wishes of all those who have come into contact with her during her husband's four years as Ambassador in London.

Mrs. Aldrich's forthrightness in speech is now legendary. She has, too, qualities of heart which go far beyond any mere appearance of kindness. Never, in any company, could she stand un-remarked; and, what



Mrs. Aldrich: from Mr. Anthony Devas's recent portrait.

is more, she has the firmest possible notion of where she is going and how best to get there. She never looks aimless, or sounds it; and rare is the person who leaves her presence without thinking "There—she really likes me!"

Any Questions?

The "Embassy wives," in particular, will miss Mrs. Aldrich; for it is on their behalf that she arranged, among other things, the short lectures by leading figures in British life which have become famous far beyond the circle of those lucky enough to hear them.

The Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Kenneth Clark and Mr. Humphrey Lyttelton are among those who have addressed the assembled ladies and been tested by their response to the ritual "Any questions?" Rarely, I imagine, has an Ambassadors cut into

British life so deeply and at so many points.

Keep Off!

IF Sir John Elliot, the head of London Transport, has his way the parked private motor-car will remain a rarity in the main streets of London even after petrol rationing has been finally abolished.

This, he tells me, almost the first time since 1939 that his buses have been able to keep exactly to schedule, and he has been "making a perfect nuisance" of himself at the Ministry of Transport in the hope that this state of affairs may continue indefinitely.

A keen motorist himself, Sir John enters unselfishly into his duties as "the representative of nine million bus-journeys a day." He straps his way to Broadway, S.W.1, every morning on the Underground, and believes that four or five obvious bottle-necks excepted, London's streets can still function perfectly well if they are kept free from parked cars.

"But this talk of spending millions on fly-over roads into London—that," he says, "is all my eye!"

A Clean Sweep?

SIR HAROLD WERNHER must have found much quiet satisfaction when, on Friday, Lord Salisbury opened the new Electrolux cleaner factory at Luton.

He has been chairman of that company since it began manufacturing thirty years ago, and has seen it make its millionth cleaner and its millionth refrigerator. The firm has preserved its original "family feeling." Sir Harold is still a playing member of the firm's golf club, and sporting members of the firm's staff rely on Lady Zia Wernher for sound information about the turf.

Now the company has shown its traditional efficiency by running up an admirable new factory in eight months, and its chairman is preparing for sterner battles in the export

PEOPLE and THINGS: By ATTICUS

market and looking to the Government for timely relaxation of restrictions at home.

Due Acknowledgment

THE grant of a Royal charter to the Sadler's Wells companies and school will have given immense pleasure to their admirers—and not least to those who, like myself, are supporters of well over twenty years' standing.

We long-service medallists can remember the time when the company had still the gypsy quality, the inspired desperation which comes from

never knowing quite whether the curtain will go up again. Our mind-pictures of those days include things like Dame Margot's first appearance as the polka-dancer in "Façade," Geoffrey Toye's spectral wait-tune in "The Haunted Ball-room," and the ebullience of Constant Lambert in the orchestra-pit. These experiences had an intensity which is not often to be found in the institutionalised ballet of today.

Flying Start

Security is, of course, a great thing, although Diaghilev

never had it and there were no assured mortgages, pension schemes or sagacious committees behind "Petrouchka" or "Le Tricorne." But ballet is essentially a department of the marvellous; and bureaucracy and the marvellous don't fit well together.

The Royal Ballet has everything in its favour: a great name, a virtual monopoly of British talents, an assured audience in every quarter of the globe, a future as safe as planning and high patronage can make it. What it has now to do is to make sure that it

stays open to the inconvenient, insubordinate, irreplaceable man or woman of genius.

Agent Makes Good

CONSTITUENCY agents are not, politically speaking, the most pampered of men, and I imagine that there has been great rejoicing in their ranks at last a former agent, in the person of Mr. Dennis Vosper, was granted Ministerial status.

It was in 1946 that Mr. Vosper became agent for the Knutsford division, in Cheshire, where Colonel Bromley-Davenport, the Stentor of the Midlands, was the sitting Member. When redistribution cut the division in half, in 1949, Mr. Vosper took over the Runcorn side of it and has kept the Conservative majority at just under five figures ever since.

Agents who seek to emulate the imposing (six feet five inches in his shoes) new Minister may care to know that at the Ministry of Education, to which he was appointed as Under-Secretary in 1951, he left an impression of "sincere homespun goodness" and keen insight into the problems of others.

Backward Glance?

THAT Mr. T. S. Eliot should have been married in the church of St. Barnabas, Addison Road, which is neither his parish church, nor Mrs. Eliot's, was a matter of surprise to his friends, for there are few keener or more loyal churchmen than he.

Pieté of a professional sort may have prompted his choice. As a beginner-poet he was deeply influenced by Laforgue—so much so, in fact, as to speak of "a sort of possession by a stronger personality."

Laforgue died young; but towards the end of his short life he fell in love with an English girl, Miss Leah Lee, came over to London, and on December 31, 1886, was married to her—in the church of St. Barnabas, Addison Road.

Knowing Visitor

THERE were, until lately, two famous paradoxes in literary life. One was that Mr. Arthur Waley has never been to China; the other that Mr. Lionel Trilling, the American critic and novelist whose studies of Matthew Arnold, E. M. Forster and other English writers are masterpieces of discreet penetration had never been to England.

Mr. Waley has yet to be tempted east of Zermatt (he is a lifelong ski-runner); but the author of "The Liberal Imagination" is now, at the age of fifty-one, in this country.

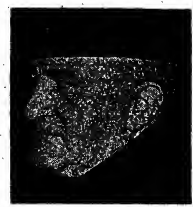
His inherited liking for this country (his great-grandmother was English) survived a wary reception by the immigration authorities and has fastened with equal enthusiasm on the texture of crumpets, the accomplished art of Sybille Bedford's "The Legacy," and the shop in which he bought a whale's tooth for his small son's museum.

There is good news, too, for those who think "The Middle of the Journey" one of the best novels of the last ten

years: Mr. Trilling has a new novel "ready for beginning" and intends to write many more.

Man of the Week

A FRIEND of mine who has a long experience of work with Sir Percy Mills tells me that he has, apart from his more obvious qualities, the gift of bringing people together. "Put him at a table with trade-union leaders and capitalists,"



Sir Percy Mills he says, "and he'll have them eating out of one another's hands."

An inspiring image. It reminded me, too, how close and compact was the wartime Ministry of Production, in which Sir Percy served in 1943-44 as Head of the Production Division, and how many of its former members have lately been in the new: Sir Percy as the new Minister of Power, the Earl of Perth as Minister of State for the Colonies, and Sir David Eccles as President of the Board of Trade. Sir Robert Sinclair, its chief executive, was, of course, made a Baron in the New Year Honours List.

I think that we can rely on the new Minister to pick—where atomic energy is concerned, especially—the team we need.

Words & People

"Our people want ample opportunity, not drab equality. There is nothing to be ashamed of in getting to the top!"

—MR. HAROLD MACMILLAN.

"The Hungarian people should have the same right as the Polish people to choose their own road—provided it is the road of socialism."

—MR. CHOU EN-LAI.

"Scores of my patients regularly enter for the football pools."

—DR. J. J. DAVIES.

Medical Superintendent, Mental Hospital, Ipswich.

"When I met Churchill we talked about nonsensical things like his book."

—MISS ELEANOR KITT.